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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 8 July 1997, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GALUSKA (Czech Republic)

later: Mr. HENZE (Germany)
(Vice-President)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION:

(c) REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARDS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME/UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND, THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND AND THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (agenda item 3 (c)) (continued) (E/1997/34 and Add.1, 49 and 79)

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the Council wished to take note of the annual report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to the Council (E/1997/79) and the report of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme (E/1997/34 and Add.1).

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the report of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme on the revision of its General Regulations (E/1997/49). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) had endorsed the proposed revisions a month previously.

Mr. MEYER (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the aim of the proposed revisions was to comply with recent General Assembly resolutions on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations, certain decisions of the World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Board, and the WFP mandate itself, with a view to clarifying the Programme's functions and its mechanisms for cooperating with FAO and other relevant agencies and organizations.

While endorsing the proposed revisions to the General Regulations of WFP, the member States of the Union noted that only Track One of the United Nations reforms was being implemented to date and that WFP would have an integral part to play in the ongoing restructuring and revitalizing of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the Council wished to take note of the report (E/1997/49), endorse the revisions contained in its Annex and forward them to the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

(d) ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (agenda item 3 (d)) ( continued ) (A/52/39)

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (A/52/39).

It was so decided .

Dialogue with country teams

Cambodia (continued )

Mr. KOSHOVOY (Russian Federation) said that the programme activities in Cambodia gave an insight into the machinery that existed for effective interaction within the United Nations system and with other actors at the country level in the areas of peacekeeping, rehabilitation and development assistance for capacity-building. Country programmes elsewhere could learn from the Cambodian experience, which should also be taken into account in operational reforms.

Senegal

Mrs. SORGHO-MOULINIER (Resident Coordinator for Senegal, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that the United Nations team in Senegal had excellent relations with the Government, civil society and other partners and that it was frequently consulted by Government policy makers on such issues as poverty eradication and unemployment.

Outlining the context in which United Nations cooperation was taking place, she said that the Senegalese economy was beginning to show signs of recovery, thanks to structural reforms, but that the social situation was of major concern given a population growth rate of 2.7 per cent and rapid urbanization. Health coverage had deteriorated considerably over the past decade. Despite legislative and other efforts for the promotion of women, further efforts were still required.

There was a real political will to reverse negative trends in such sectors as education, employment and the environment, as reflected in the Government's Ninth Plan, "Competitiveness and Sustainable Development, 1996-2001" *(Compétitivité et Développement Durable, 1996-2001)*, which was the inspiration behind the Country Strategy Note (CSN). Furthermore, local participation in the country's development had been facilitated by recent legislation.

Mr. CONLIBALY (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) said that United Nations assistance in Senegal had prioritized education, women and children, employment, poverty eradication and the economy.

Regarding national capacity-building, the United Nations had helped with the training of voluntary teachers at the elementary level and with mechanisms for involving people in the management of local development projects, with a view to strengthening the capacity of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to deal with population-related issues.

Cooperation for human development had involved training a national team of business consultants, fisheries experts and personnel capable of dealing with risk pregnancies and AIDS. Organizations had been created at community level for local waterworks and the economic promotion of women. Other support priorities had included biosphere protection, technical assistance to scientific laboratories, preservation of national heritage sites and the training of communication specialists in new technology.

The various United Nations agencies had been jointly and individually involved in an impressive range of projects that were crucial for strengthening national capacity and enhancing the management infrastructure of public and private institutions in such fields as environmental monitoring, pedology, agro-meteorology, standardization, private enterprise, industry, transport, health (vaccination and family planning), employment, communication, agriculture, forestry, women's rights, drug awareness and food security, to mention but a few. The "brain drain" problem also needed to be addressed. The team had also been engaged in a dialogue with the Government on the future sustainability of operations in the absence of United Nations funding.

Mr. SOBHY (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)) said that, owing to the diligence of the Resident Coordinator and the belief in cooperation which was shared by all the agencies, the resident coordinator system in Senegal was working extremely well and was conducive to information exchange and transparency. Long before the United Nations reform process had been initiated, highly structured coordination had existed at the country level, embracing other partners such as bilateral and multilateral donors.

There were meetings of heads of agencies every two months, or more often if the need arose. The United Nations team collaborated closely with the

Government to draft common country assessments and CSNs. Partners had worked jointly on numerous activities such as the national programme to eradicate poverty. The Government, other Member States, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) had also been involved in a variety of programmes. There had been close harmonization of inter-agency activities relating to health (especially maternal health), nutrition, employment, the advancement of women and AIDS.

Donors were closely involved in the Coordination Group presided over jointly by the World Bank and UNDP, which had various thematic sub-groups.

Ms. ZAOUDE (United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)) said that UNIFEM in Senegal was a coordinating network which, for the past nine years, had been serving as a focal point for information exchange among United Nations bodies, bilateral donors and international NGOs with a view to avoiding duplication between the partners and promoting synergy. UNIFEM had been successful in mobilizing resources and coordinating activities since the necessary political will existed at all levels to ensure the success of collaborative activities and the efficient use of limited resources in the interests of all.

Mr. OBANYA (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that there were two levels of resource mobilization: those of the United Nations agencies and of the Senegalese Government. While each agency had to act within its mandate, laudable efforts had been made to mobilize additional funding for field activities. The Government of the Netherlands had funded various programmes, including those of UNIFEM and UNESCO, and other funding had been provided by NGOs, bilateral agencies, the private sector and, in the case of UNICEF, local communities.

Joint programme financing by two or more United Nations bodies was becoming increasingly frequent. Whereas, in the past, individual agencies were funded by their respective headquarters, that task was increasingly being carried out, at least in part, by the local offices in Dakar.

Coordination with the Government was carried out through meetings of the Advisory Group and sectoral round tables. At the third meeting of the Advisory Group, held in Paris in July 1995, Senegal's Strategy for Sustainable Development: 1995-2001 had been well received by donors, and a sectoral round

table for donors on issues related to health and women had been held during the first half of 1997. The United Nations system had provided assistance to the Government before, during and after those meetings. The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa included projects on basic education and governance carried out in close cooperation with the Government.

His organization planned to evaluate its activities in the area of resource mobilization and, in particular, to seek additional funding for projects in two areas mentioned in the CSN: the fight against poverty and support for the private sector. It also hoped to improve resource mobilization at the local level.

Lastly, he emphasized the importance of mobilizing human resources at the level of United Nations agencies, government officials, NGOs and civil society.

Mr. TANKARI (World Health Organization (WHO)) said that the number and variety of funds, programmes and specialized agencies represented in Senegal made it somewhat difficult to assess the impact of the machinery for coordination on programme development and national capacity-building. In the field of the formulation of national policies and programmes, however, the agencies of the United Nations system had often played a catalytic role by providing opportunities for cooperation and consultation between the donor community and the Government. Examples of such consultation were the preparations for the formulation of the national Strategy and Plan for Sustainable Development for the period 1995-2000, the public investment programme, the programme on poverty, the national employment policy, the national plans of action for women and children, the national health and social development plan and the regulatory framework for NGO activities in Senegal.

As regarded programme execution, close coordination between the agencies concerned took various forms: mutual participation in meetings of project-steering committees, consultation during the preparation of annual plans of action, joint field visits, and so on. Such coordination had made it possible to improve programme execution in a number of areas by harmonizing activities, avoiding duplication and enhancing the impact of the operational activity in question. A number of the mechanisms for coordination were open

to the organizations of civil society, thus offering them an opportunity to take part in the discussions of topics of national interest and to be involved in the decision-making process.

Mrs. SORGHO-MOULINIER (Resident Coordinator for Senegal, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that the need for coordination was particularly strong in Senegal because of the number of multilateral and bilateral bodies involved in operational activities for development there. In 1995, total Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Senegal had been $65 per head of population. The Government had made great efforts, in the last two years particularly, to organize sectoral coordination, with regard to health and the advancement of women especially, but much remained to be done and the role of the United Nations remained crucial in the coordination of external assistance.

Steps needed to be taken by the United Nations system itself to remove impediments to coordination by improving and extending joint programming. Some examples already existed, such as the maternal health programme, co-financed by the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and WHO, and the community nutrition programme co-financed by the World Bank, WFP and bilateral donors (Germany and the Netherlands). Many more such examples were needed.

It was hoped, however, that work on a common country assessment, which, as had been noted, was already quite far advanced, could be speeded further and that greater harmonization could be achieved in financial and administrative procedures. The practical possibilities of common services were already being explored by the team in the field and the moment had come for the various headquarters to harmonize their interpretations of the programme approach and of and national execution. The financial commitments of the donor community should extend over a sufficient period to allow programming cycles to be harmonized with the country's development plans.

It was desirable for the agency headquarters to show support for the resident coordinator system by providing additional resources. Currently, only UNDP provided financial support for coordination. Country teams should be given an opportunity to participate in the Turin Workshop on Coordination organized by ILO. The overall success of the coordination machinery must be evaluated in terms of enhancing the national Government's capacity to provide

leadership and continuity in operational activities. She assured the members of the Council that the team in Senegal was resolutely committed to advancing coordination.

Mr. LUNDBORG (Sweden), having thanked the members of the country team for their very useful presentation, asked in connection with the question of budgeting for development activities in Senegal, what the ratio was between the total United Nations budget and overall ODA. He noted that, in Senegal, the specialized agencies and the various programmes and funds seemed to be playing the same role. Various General Assembly resolutions had stressed that the task of the specialized agencies should be normative rather than operational. He would like to know, therefore, whether there was any difference between their role and that played by the programmes and funds in Senegal. The World Bank, for example, asserted that it was increasingly involved in capacity-building. Was that the case in Senegal, and, if so, what was the difference between the capacity-building activities of UNDP and those of the World Bank?

Mrs. DIALLO (Observer for Senegal) said that the major challenge of the twenty-first century for the African countries was to achieve sustainable development. The support of donor countries and of the international community was essential in coordinating national efforts to that end. The central framework for that international cooperation was the United Nations system.

Her Government's concept of development was based on the principles of peace, security and democracy. It further believed that the process should centre on development of the human person and that the ultimate aim must be prosperity for all. Accordingly, the Government had welcomed the cooperation of all the organizations represented in Dakar. That cooperation had been frank and open and she thanked the heads and field staff of all the agencies concerned.

The United Nations system had played a valuable role in fostering a favourable environment for development in Senegal. However, although the last three years had seen an increase in the national GDP, problems still remained in respect of the alleviation of poverty, in the health and education sectors especially. Senegal was approaching the end of the final structural adjustment plan agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and

she wondered whether the United Nations had taken account of the new situation. She asked how far programmes and resources in Senegal would be redeployed so as to target the key sectors of health and education.

Ms. DURRANT (Jamaica) said that the panel dialogue with country teams, based on experience at the field level, was very important to the Council. She noted that the success or failure of many country programmes depended on the ability of the resident coordinator concerned to mobilize supplementary non-core funds. Was assistance required in that respect in Senegal or was it not a problem there? Also, to what extent was the modality of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), which lent itself particularly to coordination, being used in Senegal? She would like to know what role was played by TCDC in country programming in general and, more specifically, whether any assistance was needed from UNDP and the Special Unit for TCDC.

Mrs. SIRVE (Finland) asked what the current difficulties were with regard to the implementation of joint planning and whether any attempt had been made so far to engage in joint evaluation. She would also like to know what decentralization issues were being tackled at the country level. The information that had been presented on resource mobilization was particularly interesting, and she would like to hear from the UNDP representative what the experience had been in Senegal with the performance-based fund-raising mechanism.

Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) said that he had noted that Senegal possessed a national education programme. He would welcome more specific information about the role of the Resident Coordinator in the development of the educational sector and about coordination at the ground level with regard to resources, planning and evaluation.

Mr. ACEMAH (Uganda) asked whether, given Gambia's close geographical proximity to Senegal, any machinery existed for coordinating United Nations operational activities in the two countries and, if so, how effective it was.

Mrs. SORGHO-MOULINIER (Resident Coordinator for Senegal, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that, according to the 1995 UNDP Development Cooperation Report technical cooperation provided by the United Nations system accounted for some 11 per cent of ODA in that year.

Expanded balance-of-payments support from IMF and the World Bank accounted for 61 per cent of the total, investment projects for a further 28 per cent and emergency food assistance for 3 per cent. She would ask some of her colleagues to reply to the question about the respective roles in operational activities of the specialized agencies and the funds and programmes. As for the normative role of the specialized agencies, she believed that it was desirable that they should continue to play such a role in the sense that it would guarantee that the advice given to the Government was neutral.

The question about the intervention of UNDP and the World Bank in the area of capacity-building was particularly timely. UNDP was to hold an African Forum on Governance at Addis Ababa in July 1997 and, at the same time, a Colloquium on the topic in New York. In addition, the African Governors of the World Bank had just submitted a report on capacity-building. In the field, the country team had taken advantage of all the missions from Washington and New York on the topic in order to help the Government define a national programme on governance that included capacity-building. She hoped that, in due course, a joint mission could be sent in answer to the Government's request for help in formulating a national programme.

She had been glad to learn from the observer for Senegal that the Government felt the same as the country team about the climate of confidence that reigned in their relations. The national strategies adopted by the Government were in perfect accordance with the team's recommendations, as set out in the document that had been circulated to the Committee.

The observer for Senegal had asked specifically what was foreseen in respect of operational activities once structural adjustment was completed. The answer was that the country team was ready to start a new phase. Its members had been assisting the Government over the last two years in formulating a strategy and a plan to alleviate poverty. They had helped to diagnose the situation and to determine what regions in particular needed to benefit from it and what the target populations should be. It would be some time, however, before the economic growth resulting from structural adjustment could bring social progress in its wake.

Senegal's long experience in TCDC had led to its selection as a pivotal country by the Special Unit for TCDC in New York. A programme for increased

TCDC was already in the drafting stage, and would be ready for presentation early in 1998. She would ask her colleague from UNICEF to reply to the question about the capacity of the various organizations to obtain supplementary funding.

The representative of Finland had asked a question about joint evaluation. For the time being, the basis for evaluation was the CSN, but work had been started on the Common Country Assessment (CCA), and it would, she hoped, be completed by the first quarter of 1998.

The representative of Bangladesh had asked about coordination to achieve a joint programme in education. The System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, adopted in March 1996, had offered an excellent opportunity to unite all the organizations of the United Nations system and bilateral and multilateral donors in promoting operational activities in the field of education. Preliminary meetings had been held with the Minister of Basic Education and the Government had expressed a desire for a joint United Nations programme to develop basic education. The Administrator of UNDP, as Co-Director of the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), had been requested to draw the attention of the heads of the World Bank and UNESCO to the Government's wish, and the World Bank, UNESCO, UNDP and UNICEF had held a meeting to prepare a joint programme for basic educational development that could be placed before the donor community at the beginning of 1998.

Another example of a joint programme was the pilot programme for poverty eradication. The United Nations Capital Development Fund had agreed to participate in the formulation of such a pilot programme and interest had been raised among bilateral donors. A seminar had been held in eastern Senegal involving representatives of NGOs, village and community organizations, and the population at large.

Some assistance was being provided at the administrative level in respect of coordination between Gambia and Senegal, and the other neighbouring country, Guinea-Bissau, but there was as yet no such cooperation in terms of actual programmes.

Mr. SOBHY (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)), replying to a question from the representative of Jamaica on non-core and supplementary

funding, said that, over the five years from 1991 to 1996, UNICEF had collected between 16 and 17 million dollars through approaches to Governments, through its national committees and from the private sector, in addition to the proceeds of sales of its greetings cards.

The answer to the question by the representative of Finland was that UNICEF operated with a higher degree of decentralization than other agencies, and that its representatives had considerable discretion in deciding what should be included in country programmes, with due regard, of course, for the priorities of the recipient Governments.

Mr. OBANYA (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that the answer to the Swedish representative's question was that the role of UNESCO was mainly normative, but that it also took the form of technical support to other locally-based agencies, as for example when it worked with UNDP and the World Bank on conference preparation and follow-up. There had been similar cooperation with the Bank in the context of the human resources development programme in Senegal, which had been executed nationally with UNESCO support.

Another example, mentioned by the Resident Coordinator, concerned the Special Initiative on Africa, where UNESCO had organized and carried out the preliminary study supported by funding from other agencies. Almost every country had a programme on education and population, and UNESCO cooperated with UNFPA, contributing ideas and training until a sufficient pool of national staff had been established to take over its execution, whereupon its role became merely supervisory, again in association with UNFPA.

Decentralization was being pursued by all agencies, and UNESCO had increased the number of its African offices from 3 to 21 in recent years. Decentralization also applied to responsibilities, and, as Director of the UNESCO Regional Office in Senegal, he was personally able to decide on details of implementation of programmes.

He assured the representative of Bangladesh that Senegal did have a national education policy, and that UNESCO involvement went back to 1985. In that case, too, there was extensive cooperation with all the other agencies on certain aspects of educational policy.

In answer to the representative of Uganda, he said that the only area in which there had been cross-border cooperation with Gambia as far as UNESCO was concerned was that relating to the national languages common to the two countries, where the sharing of material reduced costs.

Mr. TANKARI (World Health Organization (WHO)), referring to questions about the role of the specialized agencies, said that WHO had been engaged in a process of reform over the last few years. Although it was clearly essential that it should retain its standard-setting role in the case of African developing countries, such as Senegal, it was also essential for it to continue to provide technical support at the country level to meet their pressing needs.

Mr. SANGONE (World Bank), replying to the representative of Sweden, said that the Bank was actively engaged in capacity-building activities, usually at the microeconomic and sectoral level, including in the private sector. In cooperation with FAO and the Government of Senegal it was working out an agriculture-development strategy in preparation for an investment programme. With UNDP, it was contributing to the improvement of public services. No single organization could address the full range of development problems, and the key words were complementarity and synergism.

In answer to a question by the observer for Senegal, he said that, the major structural reforms having been carried out, the Bank was turning its attention increasingly to the social sector - on the assumption that it would never again have to grapple with macroeconomic problems, and that the State would concentrate on basic activities, drawing on the private sector wherever appropriate.

Mr. Henze (Germany), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. BAHAMONDES (Canada) congratulated the Regional Coordinator on her presentation and expressed appreciation of the recommendations made. He would, however, have preferred more attention to be given to matters that were not operating entirely satisfactorily. The Regional Coordinator had mentioned the need for global consultation machinery to assist donors, and he wondered what precisely needed to be done to establish such a group in Senegal.

As far as evaluation was concerned, he would like to know what view was taken of the potential of a thematic approach. As for cooperation between the

funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, he was familiar with the arrangements made by UNDP but would be interested to know whether there were similar agreements between the funds and programmes and other agencies. He would also welcome information about the proportion of their time resident coordinators devoted to their coordination activities.

Mr. HEARD (United Kingdom) said that, since the CSN and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) approaches were coming into greater prominence, it would be interesting to know to what extent the starting and finishing dates of programmes were being synchronized and whether further efforts were being made to bring them more closely into line. He would also like to know to what extent joint projects were being undertaken and how far the programme approach was being applied.

It would also be interesting to hear what the expectations were from wider United Nations reform. The possibility had been mentioned of joint premises for United Nations bodies and the use of common services. Sustainability and the capacity of national authorities to continue work initiated by United Nations bodies was also an important subject. Much had been said about coordination, and he wondered whether attention was also being given to building national capacity to coordinate aid.

Mr. ROHNER (Observer for Switzerland) said that the Resident Coordinator's presentation and the answers to questions indicated that a "coordination culture" had been successfully established in Senegal. Like the United Kingdom representative he believed that it was important to establish coordination by the national authorities themselves and the Resident Coordinator had indicated that much still remained to be done in that regard.

He had been surprised to learn that there remained considerable room for improvement in the application of the programme approach. He wondered what economies could be achieved from the use of joint services. Subregional facilities had been mentioned in connection with "change management", as it was called in UNDP. Perhaps the possibility of entering into such arrangements had not yet been considered, but he was convinced that the organizations represented in the team had the capacity to make a contribution at both the subregional and regional levels.

The achievements in Senegal could well be presented as a case-study that would make United Nations development activities better known to other countries and the general public; serious consideration should be given to embodying them in a brochure or booklet.

Mr. UIJTERLINDE (Netherlands) said that coordinating so many separate organizations must represent a formidable task. He would appreciate further information about collaboration between the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions, particularly the World Bank, and more specifically with regard to poverty-elimination programmes and the devising of new strategies in that area - a purpose for which trust funds had been established.

Mr. CHATAIGNER (France) said that his delegation was also interested in the question of common premises and wondered whether it would be feasible to construct a single building in Dakar for use by all the United Nations bodies working there. It was quite clear that much depended on the personality and abilities of the resident coordinators; had any system or procedure been devised for their selection? Faith in coordination had been said to be essential, but how was it to be inculcated? By further training in the ILO's school in Turin, perhaps? Another contribution might be strict evaluation by the headquarters of each organization, and he wondered whether that was being currently carried out. As far as a down-to-earth approach could make a contribution, it must be doubted whether that would come from the decisions of the Council or the General Assembly; it seemed more likely to emerge from practical experience in the field.

As to the sharing of information between the various bodies, that might best be achieved by exchanges of staff between them. He also wondered whether the various internal reform programmes instituted by the different agencies were operating convergently or divergently.

A specific question for UNICEF was whether its representative considered that some of the improvements it had made in its management methods could be extended to other agencies. With regard to the Special Initiative on Africa, he would be grateful to know whether it opened up prospects for promoting coordination between the different agencies.

Mrs. SORGHO-MOULINIER (Resident Coordinator for Senegal, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), referring to the Canadian

representative's request for more information about what was not functioning well, said that the lack of a global consultative mechanism between donors and governments was certainly something that could be improved. The existing consultative group had met in 1995, after a lapse of eight years. At that meeting, however, the Government and the donor community had recognized that coordination was a government priority but that it needed support from the World Bank.

With regard to the question of cooperation between funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, particularly in respect of programming and execution, she said that that extremely important question was linked to national execution. A 1994 UNDP evaluation had shown that, as far as Senegal was concerned, the specialized agencies had been insufficiently involved in programming and execution at the outset, but technical support funds had subsequently been made available at the programming stage. At the execution stage, care had been taken to ensure that the specialized agencies could operate on aspects of programmes where there was no recognized local capacity. Special care had also to be taken in evaluating local execution capacities, perhaps even more so than in the past.

As for the question how much of her time was devoted to coordination, she said that it represented approximately 40 per cent. As far as the UNDP Office was concerned, high performance was also required from staff, which was particularly important in a country like Senegal where the UNDP programme had a vital role to play.

In reply to the question by the representative of the United Kingdom on the CSN, she said that the Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Planning had agreed to form a committee made up of representatives of the United Nations system and of the national administration. The Government had not yet, however, established a legal process for the ratification of the resulting document.

In reply to the questions by the representatives of the United Kingdom and France on common premises, she said that Senegal had donated a large tract of land to the United Nations agencies for that purpose. The blueprints were ready but financing had not yet been secured. While it would certainly

facilitate coordination and dialogue if all the United Nations agencies in Dakar were placed under one roof, some of those agencies already occupied premises supplied by the Government at no cost and might be reluctant to leave them.

In reply to the questions from the observer for Switzerland, she explained that different agencies allowed different degrees of national budgetary autonomy. Some intervened only at the auditing stage, while others retained full financial control of projects. She had taken note of the suggestion that Senegal's example might be presented in booklet form.

In reply to the question from the representative of the Netherlands concerning cooperation between the World Bank and UNDP, she said that Senegal had elected to take an advisory group rather than a round table approach and that the World Bank and UNDP were the joint leaders of the country's donor committee. At the programming level, coordination of programmes on poverty and, to a lesser extent, governance, had already been implemented. However, such coordination involved not merely UNDP and the World Bank but the entire operational system.

In reply to the question by the representative of France, she said that both resident coordinators and local heads of agencies should be judged on the basis of their commitment to coordination.

The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa had been a golden opportunity for coordination and a catalyst for activities with other donors. In January 1997, an information group devoted to the promotion of education, in which the French cooperation mission had played a major role, had been established.

Mr. CONLIBALY (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)), replying to the question by the representative of Canada on cooperation between UNFPA and the other agencies at the programming level, said that programme review and strategy development meetings were held with the participation of all the development partners in the field of population in order to review past programmes, plan those to be implemented over the next five years and determine whether the Government would require technical assistance from United Nations agencies or NGOs.

For example, 65 per cent of UNFPA programmes in Senegal were implemented by the Government or national NGOs, 25 per cent by the United Nations system, particularly UNESCO, and 10 per cent by UNFPA, primarily in the areas of procurement and training.

In reply to the question by the observer for Switzerland, he said that the fact that there were 16 agencies located in Dakar, many of them with regional offices that covered several countries, encouraged coordination.

In reply to the question by the representative of France, he said that, rather than exchanging staff members, the agencies called on each other for assistance in the preparation of basic and programming documents.

He agreed that it would be useful to bring all the agencies together under one roof; there were some problems in that regard, however, and, in any case, common premises did not guarantee cooperation, nor was cooperation dependent on common premises.

He agreed with the representative of UNICEF that the Resident Coordinator must coordinate rather than function as a dictator. In Senegal, that had been the case and had produced encouraging results.

Mr. SOBHY (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)), replying to questions by the representatives of Canada and the United Kingdom, said that UNICEF would consider the possibility of joint evaluations.

In reply to the question by the representative of the United Kingdom on programme cycles, he said that UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF had harmonized their programmes with the Senegalese national development plan.

His organization supported the idea of common premises and would discuss the matter with other agencies. Care must be exercised, however, with regard to the incurment of costs, which had posed a problem in some situations where common premises had already been established.

There was a need for assessment of the areas in which common services should be strengthened. The Resident Coordinator had mentioned the area of procurement services, but enhanced security was also necessary.

In reply to a question by the observer for Switzerland, he said that UNICEF might submit concrete suggestions for a pamphlet on the success of coordination in Senegal for the use of other countries.

In reply to the question by the representative of France on the profile for the success of the system, he said that there was already a profile

establishing the necessary experience and qualifications for the post of resident coordinator and that other agencies could, if UNDP so requested, present their own ideas in that regard.

With regard to confidence in coordination on the part of the specialized agencies, he said that a culture of coordination already existed at Dakar, and newly established agencies slipped easily into the cooperation pattern. That culture could be strengthened through the organization of retreats to allow the heads of agencies to discuss coordination problems. It would also be a good idea for heads of agencies to schedule briefings for their colleagues at other agencies.

With regard to the question on programmes of excellence, he said that he had participated in the meeting on those programmes which had been held in New York and suggested that other agencies should examine their own working methods and identify ways of improving them.

Ms. ZAOUDE (United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)) said, in reply to the question by the representative of the United Kingdom, that gender mainstreaming in the field was of great importance and required inter-agency coordination. A number of agencies had a mandate to incorporate gender issues into their programmes, and UNIFEM was working closely to strengthen the focal points in various institutions. Her organization participated in the preparation of CSNs and other coordination mechanisms in order to ensure that gender issues were taken seriously at the programming level and in the field.

Governments were primarily responsible for coordination, and it was more difficult for the ministry responsible for gender issues to raise funds for its mainstreaming role than for the financing of specific programmes.

A number of ILO programmes in Senegal had been transferred to the Government, and there were many situations, particularly those involving grass-roots initiatives, which could best be handled by Senegalese NGOs. Capacity-building at the national level was essential, and UNIFEM had worked to develop gender-training programmes in the School of Journalism and, in cooperation with the French Ministry of Cooperation, in national institutions which dealt with violence.

Mr. SANGONE (World Bank), replying to questions by the representatives of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, said that greater efforts were needed in the areas of sustainability and capacity-building.

Investment programmes often failed to take into account recurrent costs, particularly when the macroeconomic situation was unstable. The World Bank and UNDP could assist with capacity-building in the areas of programming and investment, in cooperation with the Ministries of the Economy, Finance and Planning and of Modernization, Technology and the Civil Service.

In reply to the question by the representative of the Netherlands, he said that the Bank was cooperating effectively with UNDP on poverty-related issues. For example, it had carried out a poverty assessment to establish the most-affected Senegalese regions and population groups in order to provide the Government with the necessary information for the strategy development as part of a UNDP programme on poverty.

Mr. TANKARI (World Health Organization (WHO)), replying to the question by the representative of the United Kingdom on strengthened capacities in the fight against AIDS, said that, while there was a very low level of AIDS in Senegal, the national authorities attached great importance to the problem. The national AIDS programme had an excellent coordinator, who had even been able to extend coordination to the subregion. Although United Nations participation did not really seem necessary, WHO had decided to contribute to the national effort by setting up a thematic group to coordinate the work of various United Nations agencies.

Mrs. d'ALMEIDA (United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)) said that UNDCP was the most recent programme established in Senegal and maintained excellent coordination with the other agencies.

In reply to a question by the representative of Bangladesh, she said that UNDCP had programmes in 27 countries and that its experience in Senegal could easily be applied elsewhere. At the subregional level, UNDCP had set up drug-prevention programmes in the schools of Cape Verde, Gambia and Guinea Bissau as well as in Senegal and had received a special contribution from the Government of Denmark to establish genuine inter-agency coordination for reduction in the demand for drugs.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.